

Dr. Robert Peterson, Theology of Luke-Acts, Session 8, Peterson, Church in Luke, Part 1 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Peterson, Theology of Luke-Acts, Session 8, Peterson, Church in Luke, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert A. Peterson's lecture, "The Church in Luke, The New Testament People of God, Part 1," explores foundational aspects of the church as presented in the Gospel of Luke. The session highlights Luke's purpose in writing his gospel and its connection to the book of Acts, emphasizing Jesus as Lord and Savior bringing salvation to both Jews and Gentiles. Peterson examines specific episodes in Luke, such as Simeon's prophecy, the calling of the first disciples, and the story of the sinful woman, to illustrate key characteristics of God's people: those who recognize Jesus, follow him, and are forgiven sinners. The lecture concludes by introducing the concept of discipleship as daily self-denial and commitment to Christ, foreshadowing future discussions on grace, salvation, and witnessing in Luke's narrative.

**2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Peterson, Theology of Luke-Acts, Session 8 – Double click
icon to play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (New Testament → Gospels → Luke).**



**Peterson_Theo_LkA
cts_Session08.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Theology of Luke-Acts, Session 8, Peterson, Church in Luke, Part 1

Briefing Document: The New Testament People of God in Luke (Dr. Robert A. Peterson)

Overview: This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented by Dr. Robert A. Peterson in Session 8 of his lectures on the Theology of Luke-Acts, focusing on the concept of the church as the New Testament People of God in the Gospel of Luke. Peterson analyzes several key episodes in Luke to establish the foundation for understanding who constitutes this new people of God and their characteristics.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. Luke's Purpose and Connection Between Gospel and Acts:

- Luke's Gospel is written to assure Theophilus of the truth of the events concerning Jesus' life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension.
- Luke views his Gospel and the Book of Acts as a unified narrative. The Gospel culminates in Jesus founding the church in Jerusalem, while Acts details the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth, incorporating Gentiles into the church.
- Quote: "Luke thus views his gospel in Acts as two books that belong together. The gospel moves from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, where Jesus found the church, while Acts tells of his apostles preaching the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth, that more and more people, including Gentiles, might join the church and worship Christ, Acts 1:8."

1. Simeon's Prophecy: Inclusion of Gentiles (Luke 2:25-32):

- The encounter with Simeon in the temple highlights the early recognition of Jesus as the Messiah and the inclusion of Gentiles in God's plan of salvation.
- Simeon, a righteous and devout man awaiting the "consolation of Israel," prophesies that the infant Jesus is "a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel" (Luke 2:32).
- Peterson emphasizes that "all peoples" in verse 31 clarifies to include Gentiles in verse 32, marking a significant shift from the Old Testament context where salvation was primarily associated with Israel.

- Quote: "My eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel, Luke 2:30 through 32."
- This universalizing tendency in Luke introduces the idea that believing Gentiles and Jews will become part of the people of God.

1. **The Calling of the First Disciples: Fishers of Men (Luke 5:4-11):**

- The miraculous catch of fish and Jesus' subsequent call to Simon Peter and his partners illustrate the transformation of sinners into those who will gather others for God.
- Jesus' words, "from now on, you will be catching men" (Luke 5:10), foreshadow the evangelistic mission of the church in Acts.
- The disciples' immediate and radical response of leaving everything to follow Jesus exemplifies the commitment required of members of God's New Testament people.
- Peterson argues that becoming part of the church requires believing in Jesus as Lord and Savior, evidenced by a dedication to him above all else.
- Quote: "According to Luke 5:4 to 11, sinners become the people of God by responding to Jesus as Peter and his fellow disciples did... True disciples leave all and follow Jesus. He occupies first place in their lives."

1. **The Forgiven Sinner: Luke 7:36-50:**

- The story of the sinful woman anointing Jesus' feet in the Pharisee's house demonstrates that the New Testament people of God are comprised of forgiven sinners who respond to God's grace with love and gratitude.
- Jesus' parable of the two debtors highlights that forgiveness precedes love; the one forgiven more loves more.
- This episode challenges self-righteousness and emphasizes God's grace extending to the despised. The church consists of those who recognize their sinfulness and have experienced God's forgiveness through Jesus.
- Quote: "Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much, but he who was forgiven little, loves little." (Luke 7:47)

- Peterson quotes Luther: "there were only two kinds of people in the world, and they were both sinners, unforgiven and forgiven ones."

1. Taking Up the Cross Daily: Luke 9:23-27:

- Following Jesus and being part of his people requires self-denial, a daily commitment to taking up one's cross, and wholehearted devotion to him.
- "Denying oneself" means putting God first and trusting Christ alone for salvation, abandoning any notion of earning it.
- "Taking up the cross daily" is a metaphor for dying to one's own desires and living for God, a continuous aspect of the Christian life.
- Those who are ashamed of Jesus and his words risk being rejected by him at his return. Conversely, those who lose their life for his sake will save it.
- Quote: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." (Luke 9:23)
- Peterson concludes that the New Testament people of God are dedicated disciples who prioritize Christ above themselves, even unto death, and will ultimately gain eternal life and glory with him.

Conclusion:

Dr. Peterson's analysis of these passages in Luke lays a foundational understanding of the New Testament people of God. They are characterized by their inclusion of both Jews and Gentiles through faith in Jesus, their transformation from sinners called to be "fishers of men," their experience of God's forgiveness leading to deep love and gratitude, and their daily commitment to self-denial and following Christ, even in the face of suffering. These early glimpses in Luke's Gospel foreshadow the expansion and nature of the church as depicted in the Book of Acts.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Theology of Luke-Acts, Session 8, Peterson, Church in Luke, Part 1

The Church in Luke: The New Testament People of God, Part 1

Quiz

1. According to Luke's prologue, what is the purpose of his Gospel for Theophilus?
2. In Simeon's prophecy at the presentation of Jesus, what significant statement does he make about the scope of salvation?
3. What was the surprising result of Peter and his companions letting down their nets at Jesus' command, and how did Peter react to this event?
4. What did Jesus mean when he told Simon Peter, "from now on you will be catching men"? How does this relate to the early disciples' actions?
5. In the story of the sinful woman anointing Jesus' feet, what contrast does Jesus draw between her actions and those of the Pharisee Simon?
6. What is the main point of the parable Jesus tells about the moneylender and the two debtors in Luke 7?
7. According to Luke 9:23, what are the three core elements of following Jesus?
8. What does Jesus mean when he says, "whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it"?
9. What is the significance of Jesus' statement in Luke 9:26 regarding being ashamed of him and his words?
10. How does Peterson interpret Jesus' prediction in Luke 9:27 that some standing there will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God?

Answer Key

1. Luke states in his prologue (Luke 1:1-4) that his Gospel is designed to assure Theophilus concerning the things that have been fulfilled among them, specifically the events of Jesus' life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension.
2. Simeon prophesies that the baby Jesus is the salvation prepared by God in the presence of all peoples, stating he is "a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel" (Luke 2:30-32), indicating salvation's universal reach.

3. They caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to tear and both boats were filled to the point of sinking. Peter's reaction was one of recognizing Jesus' divine power and his own sinfulness, leading him to exclaim, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:8).
4. Jesus' statement meant that Peter and the other disciples would transition from catching fish to gathering people to follow God, signifying the beginning of their role in evangelism. Their immediate response of leaving everything to follow Jesus illustrates their commitment to this new calling.
5. Jesus contrasts the woman's extravagant and heartfelt expressions of love and honor (washing his feet with tears, wiping them with her hair, kissing them, and anointing them with expensive ointment) with Simon's lack of basic hospitality and courtesy.
6. The parable illustrates that those who have been forgiven more will love the forgiver more. It underscores the point that the woman's great love was a response to the great forgiveness she had received from Jesus, highlighting that forgiveness precedes and motivates love and gratitude.
7. The three elements are: denying oneself (putting God first, relinquishing self-reliance for salvation), taking up one's cross daily (a metaphorical daily dying to self and one's desires, living for God), and following Jesus (continuing to live as his disciple by following his example).
8. This paradoxical statement means that those who prioritize their own comfort and security in this life will ultimately lose eternal life, while those who sacrifice their own desires and lives for the sake of Christ and his kingdom will gain true and eternal life.
9. Being ashamed of Jesus and his teachings signifies a lack of genuine faith and salvation. Those who persistently deny or are ashamed of Christ risk being denied by him when he returns in glory with the Father and the holy angels, indicating exclusion from his kingdom.
10. Peterson suggests that while the saying has puzzled interpreters, its fulfillment is likely foreshadowed in the transfiguration, which offers a glimpse of Jesus' glory and points towards his death, resurrection, ascension, and ultimately his second coming in glory. Some also see its fulfillment in Jesus' resurrection, exaltation, and enthronement as Messiah in Acts 2.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze Luke's presentation of Jesus in the infancy narrative (Luke 1-2) as laying the groundwork for the inclusion of Gentiles in the New Testament people of God, focusing on the prophecies of Simeon.
2. Discuss how the calling of the first disciples in Luke 5:1-11 illustrates the transformation from ordinary life to becoming part of God's people, emphasizing the themes of response to Jesus' word and the call to evangelism.
3. Compare and contrast the characters of the Pharisee Simon and the sinful woman in Luke 7:36-50, and explain how this narrative reveals key characteristics of the New Testament people of God.
4. Examine Jesus' teaching on discipleship in Luke 9:23-27, and discuss the implications of self-denial, taking up one's cross daily, and following Jesus for understanding membership in the New Testament people of God.
5. Synthesize the insights from the passages discussed in this session (Luke 2:25-32, 5:4-11, 7:36-50, 9:23-27) to create a comprehensive description of the foundational characteristics of the New Testament people of God as presented in the Gospel of Luke.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Consolation of Israel:** A Jewish expectation and term for the coming of the Messiah who would bring comfort, deliverance, and restoration to Israel.
- **Gentiles:** People who are not of Jewish origin or descent; the nations other than Israel.
- **Messiah (Christ):** The promised deliverer and king of the Jewish people, prophesied in the Old Testament. "Christ" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "Messiah," meaning "anointed one."
- **Salvation:** Deliverance from sin, its consequences (including death and separation from God), and the power of evil, brought about through faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Evangelism:** The proclamation of the good news (gospel) of Jesus Christ, with the aim of persuading people to believe and follow him.
- **Disciple:** A follower or learner of Jesus Christ, committed to his teachings and way of life.
- **Auto-sotirism:** The belief that one can achieve salvation or deliverance through one's own efforts or merits, without divine aid.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the "last things" or end times, including the second coming of Christ, judgment, and the eternal state.
- **Transfiguration:** A miraculous event in the Gospels where Jesus' appearance was supernaturally changed and he was revealed in glory to Peter, James, and John.
- **Pericope:** A short passage or excerpt from a text, often referring to a self-contained narrative or teaching unit in the Gospels.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Theology of Luke-Acts, Session 8, Peterson, Church in Luke, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on the New Testament People of God in Luke

1. How does Luke's Gospel set the stage for understanding the church as the New Testament people of God? Luke's Gospel, along with Acts, is presented as a two-part work intended to assure Theophilus of the truth concerning the fulfilled events of Jesus' life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension (Luke 1:1-4). The Gospel moves from Jesus' birth in Bethlehem to Jerusalem, where the foundation for the church is laid. Luke concludes his Gospel by emphasizing the scriptural prediction of Jesus' death and resurrection, and the proclamation of repentance and forgiveness to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). This naturally leads into the book of Acts, which details the apostles' preaching from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth, expanding God's people to include Gentiles (Acts 1:8).

2. What significance does Simeon's encounter with the infant Jesus hold for the identity of God's people in Luke's narrative? Simeon, a righteous and devout man awaiting the consolation of Israel, was guided by the Holy Spirit to the temple where he recognized the infant Jesus as the Lord's Christ (Luke 2:25-27). In his blessing, Simeon declares that Jesus is "a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel" (Luke 2:32). This early declaration is crucial as it introduces Luke's theme of universal salvation, indicating that God's people will not be limited to Israel but will include Gentiles who receive revelation through Jesus. This foreshadows the inclusion of Gentiles as equals in the people of God, a major theme in Luke-Acts.

3. How does the calling of the first disciples, as depicted in the "Fishers of Men" passage (Luke 5:4-11), illustrate the formation of the New Testament people of God? The miraculous catch of fish served as a catalyst for Simon Peter and his partners, James and John, to recognize Jesus' divine power and authority. Peter's reaction of acknowledging his sinfulness and calling Jesus "Lord" signifies an initial step of faith and submission (Luke 5:8). Jesus' subsequent promise that they would become "fishers of men" highlights their future role in gathering people into God's kingdom through evangelism. Their radical decision to leave everything and follow Jesus demonstrates the commitment and priority that characterize true discipleship and belonging to the New Testament people of God. This passage underscores that responding to Jesus with faith and a willingness to follow him is central to becoming part of this new community.

4. What does the story of the sinful woman anointing Jesus (Luke 7:36-50) reveal about who belongs to the New Testament people of God? This episode contrasts the self-righteousness of the Pharisee, Simon, with the humble and loving devotion of a woman known as a sinner. Jesus uses the parable of the two debtors to illustrate that those who have been forgiven much love much (Luke 7:47). The woman's extravagant display of love is a response to the forgiveness she has received. Jesus declares, "Your sins are forgiven... Your faith has saved you; go in peace" (Luke 7:48, 50). This story emphasizes that the New Testament people of God are comprised of forgiven sinners who, in gratitude for God's grace, demonstrate their love for Jesus. It challenges the notion that belonging to God's people is based on outward piety or social standing, highlighting instead the transformative power of forgiveness and the love it inspires.

5. According to Luke 9:23-27, what are the defining characteristics of those who follow Jesus and belong to the New Testament people of God? Jesus' teaching on taking up one's cross daily outlines the radical commitment required of his followers. It involves three key elements: self-denial (putting God first and abandoning self-reliance), daily cross-bearing (a metaphorical death to one's own desires and a willingness to suffer for Christ), and continuous following of Jesus' example. This passage emphasizes that discipleship is not a one-time decision but a daily orientation of life lived for Christ. Those who belong to the New Testament people of God are characterized by their willingness to lose their lives for Jesus' sake in order to truly save them, and they are not ashamed of Jesus and his words, anticipating his glorious return.

6. How does Luke connect the events of Jesus' earthly ministry with the subsequent growth of the church in Acts? Luke intentionally structures his two-volume work to show a continuous narrative of God's saving work. The Gospel culminates in Jesus' ascension and his command for the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:4-8). This direct link establishes that the empowerment of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the first event recorded in Acts, is the fulfillment of Jesus' promise and the beginning of the church's mission. Luke portrays Jesus' ministry as laying the foundation for this expansion, with themes like universal salvation and the inclusion of Gentiles already present in the Gospel narrative.

7. What is the role of salvation in defining the New Testament people of God according to Luke? Salvation is presented as the foundational element for the New Testament people of God. From Simeon's recognition of the infant Jesus as "your salvation" (Luke 2:30) to Jesus' declaration to the sinful woman, "Your faith has saved you" (Luke 7:50), salvation is consistently portrayed as God's gracious act through Jesus. This salvation extends to both Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus, forming a new community. The forgiveness of sins, a key aspect of this salvation, is what motivates love and gratitude within this community. Therefore, the New Testament people of God are essentially those who have experienced and embraced God's salvation offered through Jesus Christ.

8. What is the significance of evangelism for the New Testament people of God as presented in Luke's Gospel? Even early in his ministry, Jesus' words and actions point towards the importance of evangelism. The calling of the disciples to become "fishers of men" (Luke 5:10) signifies a deliberate intention for them to gather others into God's people. While the full realization of this mission unfolds in Acts, Luke's Gospel lays the groundwork by showing Jesus' concern for all people, including sinners and Gentiles. The transformation of sinful individuals into followers who leave everything to pursue Jesus highlights the dynamic nature of this new community, which is called to share the good news and expand God's kingdom.